

## **Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board Meeting Minutes**

Wednesday, January 13, 2010 - 6PM-8PM

Seattle City Hall Boards and Commissions Room L280

### **1. Call to order and introductions**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. SPAB members in attendance: Tom Williams (Chair), Christina Bollo, (Vice Chair), Vanessa Lund (Secretary), Mark Bandy, Celeste Gilman, Kristen Lohse, T. Frick McNamara, Jon Morgan, Benjamin Smith, Seth Schromen-Wawrin, Howard Wu, Evan Brown [Seattle Bicycle Advisory Board (SBAB) liaison to Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board (SPAB)]

City of Seattle staff in attendance: Brian Dougherty, Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT staff liaison to SPAB), Barbara Gray (SDOT), Chad Lynch (SDOT), Kristen Simpson (SDOT), Jennifer Weiland (SDOT)

Members of the public in attendance: Devor Barton, Christine Cole, Ellen Milne, Jacob Struiksma

### **2. Approval of minutes**

Tom asked for any additional comments or corrections to December's meeting minutes.

*ACTION: On a motion made by Christina Bollo, the December minutes were unanimously approved.*

### **3. Public comment**

Tom thanked the members of the public for attending and asked if there was any comment. Hearing none, the public comment period was closed.

### **4. Presentation: Pedestrian Master Plan, Barbara Gray (SDOT)**

Barbara distributed copies of Pedestrian Master Work Plan documents (including a tactical plan spreadsheet and a summary document). Barbara explained that this is third discussion of 2010 work plan with SPAB and the purpose is to give everyone a sense of what happens next and an opportunity to provide feedback. Changes to the plan may be taken until Tuesday morning so that they can be discussed and incorporated prior to presenting the plan to City Council staff and members this coming week.

The highlighted priorities in the matrix are the 2010 milestone projects. Staffing will require SDOT to focus on this set.

The plan has been sent to the Mayor's office and central staff. The plan will be presented to City Council on January 26th at 9:30 in Council Chambers, to the Transportation Committee. There will also be a preview briefing with City Council Members Rasmussen and Godden. The other two transportation members (Council Members Licata and Burgess) have been very involved and supportive. The advance meetings are an opportunity to get some orientation questions out of the way so that the presentation to Council can focus on an overview of the plan and specific objectives.

SDOT intends to come back to SPAB and report on quarterly milestones. This plan just covers policy and programmatic actions, not infrastructure improvements, which are included in the Bridging the Gap plan.

Barbara suggested that it might be helpful to have that the Bridging the Gap group present to SPAB. Tom

mentioned that the coordination and communication between the groups is being discussed.

Christina inquired, "Can we use this draft all year?" Barbara responded, "Yes. It will be updated, though."

Mark asked Barbara to highlight performance measurement beyond this plan such as the top five intersections of concern. Barbara explained that prior to 2005 there was limited performance reporting and no consistent metrics.

"In 2005, we adopted transportation strategic plan (TSP) that includes several metrics. This plan is being updated again. For example high collision intersections - they go beyond walkability and include bike system completion etc. I think there was something in there that mentioned we were doing a ped plan, so this needs to be included in the update. We had a number of neighborhood plan projects, something on signals, something on signage completion. On a scale of 1-10, they hit in the five range. Maybe four in some cases. As we update TSP we'll be doing this again. The bigger challenge is considering how the projects actually move us toward reaching these goals. We'd like to get our model in enough shape to do this in the future – including establishing mode share targets. We have a pretty good data set because we now have asset management. It might be worthwhile to brief you on asset management. There's a lot of information that I think would be of interest. We had a challenge identifying the right measures that we can get, track. That's why we ended up with trending measures. We added severity to our measures. We can do some easier stuff like vehicle speeds over time, etc. I also think this would be a good year to have a discussion about this."

Jennifer added, "When you are briefed on infrastructure projects, you'll also get more information about this piece."

Mark commented, "A lot of this is the operational side. Whether its pavement markings, clutter, brush. Where's the monitoring of these things?"

Barbara responded, "The measures in the master plan need to be included in the strategic plan. There are also measures in the bike plan, too. The update for the strategic plan is being considered. SDOT can update policy component quickly. We're 30% of way towards draft. But we're sidetracked by data issues and forecast model constraints. We're a little stymied because the comp plan is "Johnny right now" and we need to make sure we're coordinated with updates. Also there's Destination 2040. That's going to be a hotly debated discussion over the next bit of time. We're trying to figure out if we need to get our model updated to do these things when we don't have the bigger data set to draw from. Or do we add the regional piece when there's regional consensus? If the board wants an update on work done to date – we can do that. Our goal is to do an annual assessment of rates and speeds and trend it over time. Otherwise we're just counting widgets."

T. asked about tactic 3.2 a. in the plan. Specifically, the reason for selecting 600+ foot blocks as the target. (Tactic 3.2.a.: Maintain short block distances wherever possible to improve pedestrian access. Identify locations where mid-block crossings would effectively shorten blocks longer than 600 feet.)

Jennifer explained that it is a break point in the data. Any segment longer than 600 feet is scored differently. Ideally it would be a number much lower than this. "Because there are a reasonable number, we thought we should start there."

T. suggested setting a different requirement for urban villages. Jennifer responded that there's room to look at things a little differently. Barbara agreed to note T.'s suggestion in the plan.

Barbara explained to the group that she hopes to be able to tell Council that SPAB support the plan and asked for either a verbal endorsement or letter as soon as possible.

Christina commented that the summary is particularly helpful.

Mark asked, "What's the elevator speech? What does the plan get you?"

Barbara responded that SDOT wants to make significant progress on all six objectives and take meaningful steps across the board. There are a number of systems that need to get established, definitions of standard operating procedures, across SDOT and with other agencies. Other things such as public information about walkable zones, a client assistance memo, good or best practices for maintaining walkable zone. They are also starting work on interagency agreements and addressing things that aren't working now. They're also working on the conceptual design phase around King Street (similar to Westlake hub study that was completed a few years ago.)

Tom asked when the Right-of-Way Improvements Manual would be updated. Barbara stated, this year (2010).

Barbara added that they plan to make significant progress on the lighting plan including going to the design commission in February to talk about ped lighting styles and reclaiming lighting levels. Christina added that it will be important to include DPD in the discussion. "If in next zone update they start requiring this in consistent ways, this would be a real opportunity. It's such a small part of lighting costs overall."

T. suggested that all new projects should be required to do a photometric analysis. "There are some building lights that they may want to tone down. It would also be helpful to look at energy efficient options."

Ben commented on the many changes in the city - a new plan, new mayor, new SDOT director (Peter Hahn). "Do you have a sense for what kind of support you might receive?"

Barbara indicated that she felt the mayor and director would be supportive. Regarding Peter Hahn, Barbara responded, "I'm encouraged that he'll be very supportive. I am not concerned. He's been quite progressive. I don't think there's a challenge to move these things forward. The challenge might be the balance between infrastructure and programmatic improvements."

Tom asked the Board if they are comfortable endorsing what Barbara has presented and asked for comments. After several positive comments of support.

*ACTION: On a motion made by Tom Williams, the Board unanimously endorsed the Pedestrian Master Plan 2010 Work Plan for Policy and Programmatic Actions.*

## **5. Presentation: Seattle's Recreational Walking Map (Chad Lynch and Jennifer Wieland, SDOT)**

Jennifer and Chad explained that the recreational walking map is called for in 2010 work plan. They want SPAB to understand the process for developing the map and provide some feedback.

When SDOT conducted the walking preferences survey, they learned that people walk in equal numbers for transportation and recreation. SDOT wanted to do something on the recreation side that supports and enhances the other work. The focus is recreation, but not necessarily tourism.

They looked at maps done in other cities as well as maps that have been done locally (Feet First, King County Department of Health and others). After reviewing what's been done locally, they identified some obvious gaps such as Center City and the Northwest portion of the city. The goal is not to repeat the work of others.

The process of building the map included identifying walking times from routes that were identified by other sources. They also added routes to enhance the information provided in the map. So far, routes have been added without going into the field, but they will also do this. Traffic flow has also been incorporated. And they looked at Ped Master Plan demand to find areas of importance to people who walk.

Jennifer explained that they would like to talk about how to vet these routes and have some community involvement. She also called attention to a potential feature to include on the back side of the map - a "where to

call" graphic and information sheet that helps direct people to frequently called city services.

The end product would be multiple maps that could be joined together. The goal is to have the map ready at the end of the second quarter.

Suggestions from the board included:

- Adding points of interest
- Listing/labeling the University of Washington
- Marking shopping areas in a different manner (currently, only large shopping areas are identified)
- Giving people a digital interface and making the information useful for apps
- Convening a map producers or users group to collaborate on how the information could be used and how the product(s) could be distributed
- Incorporating some Feet First resources and looking at Sustainable Seattle's street assessment tool
- Using symbols in legends similar to those used by Feet First and striving for consistency with other major maps
- Emphasizing the stairway information
- Indicating direction of slope
- Using a different system of identifying crosswalks (or deleting) - a little confusing as drawn
- Clearer differentiation between busy and quiet streets
- Identify shopping areas that aren't just malls
- Changing colors so those with red/green color blindness can read it
- Clearer trail imagery
- Adding things like farmers markets
- Add University pathways
- Add post office, simple everyday activities.
- Events such as car-free days
- Take cues from bike map - keep it clean-looking and easy to read
- More differentiating with colors (too many items are green)
- Have neighborhood groups provide some input/information
- Contour lines jumble with text and may confuse people
- Clearer symbols
- Include the resource numbers on the back side
- Include distance information and several points of interest
- identify recreational routes and how long it takes to do the whole loop
- Consider adding transit stops, ferries, transportation connections

Jennifer thanked the group for the comments and asked if they can come back in March and present the next version.

## 6. Board structure

Tom reminded the group that at the last SPAB meeting there was a discussion about potential changes to how to do business and get people more involved with issues important to the pedestrian program. At the December meeting, Celeste suggested considering reconstituting some committees and the group seemed open to the suggestion. Tom asked the group to consider possibly three committees - policy, outreach and projects.

The policy committee would be for people interested in the political side of things, how to move legislation or proposals forward. Community outreach might reach decision makers in the neighborhoods, meet with community councils, advocacy groups, etc. The projects committee would look at big initiatives such as the Alaskan Way Viaduct, SR520, etc. The committees will need someone to lead as well as a few additional members. Tom mentioned maybe Mark leading the projects committee, Kristin leading the outreach side and Seth and Jon on the policy side. Tom also mentioned that Kristen will be taking his spot on the Bridging the Gap Committee and Christina will be working with the freight group.

The group discussed the potential committee structure, adding that the outreach group might also look at reaching out to other departments, organizations, etc. Celeste asked if outreach might be considered next year. Tom added that that might make sense but that we should still make an effort individually.

## **7. Other items**

Tom announced that there will be a meeting a representative working on the Seattle Street Car/ First Hill Street Car project on January 28th at 5:30 at the Seattle Municipal Tower. Board members should let Tom know if they plan to attend. Christina added that it is very important to weigh in on the project.

Tom announced that next month Gary Johnson will be back to talk about the street food vending proposal.

## **8. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

**The next Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for February 10, 2010, 6-8 PM.  
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